A

SERMON

Preached at

HEXHAM

IN

Northumberland,

UPON THE

Publick Occasion and FAST,

being the 26th of *JUNE*, 1696.

By *WILLIAM BEWICK*,
late of St. *John*'s College, *Cambridge*.

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TO

The Right Worſhipful

Sir *William Blackett*, Baronet;

The Worſhipful

John Blakiſton,
Robert Bewick,
Henry Holmes,
Roger Fenwick,
Thomas Allgood,
} Eſquires;

The Reverend and Learned

Mr. *Elliſon*, Vicar of *Newcaſtle upon Tine*,
Mr. *Allgood*, Rector of *Simondsburn*,
Mr. *Bates*, Rector of *Whalton* in *Northumberland*, and Miniſter of St. *John*'s in the aforeſaid *Newcaſtle*,

With all the reſt of

His Gracious Benefactors;

THIS

SERMON

Is *Humbly* by the AUTHOR Dedicated.

PSAL. LXV. 2.

O Thou that heareſt Prayer, unto Thee ſhall all Fleſh come.

GOD the Lord is every where preſent, and hears the Prayers of all People, but eſpecially ready to deliver his Servants, who devoutly call upon his holy Name; wherefore it is not only our Duty, to Addreſs the Lord, that *heareth Prayer*, but our great Advantage; and therefore unto Him ſhould *all Fleſh come.*

From the Words, I ſhall take occaſion to ſhew,

I. *That it is our Duty to Pray.*
II. *That GOD hears our Prayers.*
III. *That Prayer is a Special Part of His Worſhip.*
IV. *The Efficacy and Power of Prayer, which the beſt of Perſons have uſed.*
V. *The Object of our Prayers, GOD alone.*
VI. *The Subject of them, Good and Evil; Good, for which we pray; Evil, againſt which we petition; the former of which is called Supplication; the later, Deprecation.*
VII. *The manner of our Prayers, humbly and ardently, with Faith and full Hope on God for the Fruits of them.*

I. *That it is our Duty to Pray.*

The very Light of Nature directs and obliges us thereunto, telling us, We are His Creatures, and depend upon

God; that He is our Creator, and continual Preſerver; that all we have is elſewhere, and not on ourſelves; ſo that we ſhould with all Thankfulneſs look up unto Him, unto whom we are indebted for all that is good. This we muſt confeſs, unleſs we forfeit the Prerogative Royal of Reaſonable Creatures: This we muſt do, being but our Duty to Him that is Abſolute King, Proprietary, and Lord of all by Creation.

We may reaſonably conclude, we were not ſent into the World for nothing, not made to be idle, nor delegated on ſo mean an Embaſſy as the Soldiers of that unwiſe Emperor, who being furniſh'd with all Military Accoutrements, were employ'd to gather Shells upon the Sea-ſhore.

We are each of us a little World, upon which God has ſtamp'd his own Image more perfectly than the greater, therefore much more engaged to his Gracious Goodneſs. Now, ſeeing the Heavens declare the Glory of God, and the Firmament ſheweth his Handy-work, Froſt, and Ice, and Snow are warm in their Devotions, and praiſe Him, ſhall not we offer up our Prayers unto Him, to whom we are more than they obliged; we, who are Reaſonable Creatures, like unto the Angels and God himſelf?

Methinks then we ſhould come voluntarily unto God in Prayer; Nature and Reaſon teacheth this Duty, no need of another *Index* to diſcover it to us, no *Exhortation* to allure, nor *Command* to make way for it; if we were gracious to practiſe according to our Knowledge; but ſince there is a Command of God for it, that is a ſuperinduc'd Obligation, and makes us more careful to do our Duty, by laying a double Tye on us; which, how great it is, conſider, when Nature dictates, what the King of Heaven commands.

The Majeſty of a King claimeth the Loyalty of a Subject, and as we acknowledge his Authority, we muſt ſubmit unto

unto his Will, much more to the Heavenly King of all Kings, who commands nothing, but what were moſt fit for us to chuſe.

If a great Worldly man bid you go, you will run, tho' you are not ſure to get any thing, but your Labour for your travail; you will reckon yourſelves highly honour'd to be Servants, nay, Slaves, to ſuch a man's Humours, tho' they proceed from no ſound Temper, or good Conſtitution; but when the great God of Heaven and Earth commands you to gird yourſelves, and ſet about this Duty, you will diſpute the matter, tho' the Command muſt needs be good, becauſe GOD's, and is clearly written, as with a Sunbeam.

Call upon me, ſaith the Lord, *Pſal.* 49. *Watch and pray*, *Mark* 13. *In Faith, without wavering*, ſaith Biſhop *Uſher*; *in Truth, without Guile*; *in Humility, without Pride*; *in Zeal, without Cooling*; *in Conſtancy, without Fainting, to the end.*

Prayer is the good Inſtrument God has commanded to uſe, by it to convey the Bleſſings which he in the courſe of his Providence has appointed, and is pleaſed at any time to beſtow and conferr on us: Following therefore the Apoſtle's Precept and Direction; *In all things, with Prayer make your Requeſts known unto God.*

Here are the commanding words, not of Melancholick men, nor Brain-ſick perſons, but the ſober Dictates of the Holy Ghoſt, whom you ſhould hear and obey.

We ſhould all therefore ſet about this great Duty of *Prayer*, our Hearts ſhould be reſtleſs till we come unto God: Unleſs we be worſe than the Heathens, we ſhall not neglect it, which *meer Nature* did teach them to uſe; their Goodneſs adviſe others to practiſe. Hear *Seneca*; *Bonus vir ſine Deo nemo eſt*; *No man is good without God:* unto whom, by Prayer, he is moſt effectually united. And therefore ſays *Eripides*, ἔχει χῆμα κικλησκειν, *We uſe to Pray, for*

for it is from this our Labour prospers. Whence *Pythagoras* in his Golden Verses, and these words: ἔρχεο ἐπ' ἔργον Θεοῖσιν ἐπευξάμενος, exhorts Man to come and pray unto God, for a Blessing on his Work.

And indeed, it seems unreasonable this Duty should be slighted, or our Business at any time by us begun, without *Prayer* first of all, and calling for a Blessing from God upon it: For, as *Plato* elegantly describes God *Mens æterna, Causa boni in natura*, the Eternal Spirit from whom our Blessings come; so He is worthy to be called upon for them. The doing of which speaks much to the commendation of *Scipio Africanus*, if the Story be true of him, concerning whom we read, "That he, though an "Ethnick, ever before he set himself upon the undertak-"ing Concerns, used to enter the Capitol, to submit his "Projects to the Judgment of the Gods, and implore "their Aid, for the good Success of what he took in hand. And this is what is done to the True God by every good man, who, according to *Hierocles*, Σπουδάζει ἃ εὔχεται, καὶ εὔχεται ἃ σπουδάζει, *joyns Endeavours to Prayers, and Prayers to Endeavours.*

Wherefore we have reason to be much asham'd, if we neglect so great a Duty, which the *Pagans*, by the Light of Nature, did know, practise, and advise Men to. To be dispossessed of this, convinces us to be truly Devils incarnate, abandon'd by the Justice of God, and pass'd into Swine, of which Creatures it is said, *They look every way but upwards unto Heaven.*

II. *The Lord hears our Prayers.*

Not a Word, not a Thought, but the Lord knows before they are spoken or thought of: The Womb of our Conceptions, and Closet of our Prayers, are as clear to the

the All-seeing Eye of God, as the Canopy of Heaven to us, with our Eyes open'd upwards: So that though our Prayers be private to Men, yet the Lord, who *seeth in secret*, heareth likewise, and shall *reward us openly*.

Hannah called upon God, when her Voice was not heard, 1 *Sam.* xiii. And *Moses* cried unto the Lord, when he spoke not a word, *Exod.* xiv. 15.

Hereto we may add that of St. *Cyprian*, *Deus audit vocem cordis*; *God hears the Voice of the Heart.*

But some with those in *Job* may argue, and debate, *How doth God know? Can He judge through the dark Cloud? Can He see our Hearts at such a distance, or hear our Cries afar off?*

Understand, ye Brutish among the People, and *you Fools when will you be wise?* He that is the Lord of Hosts, cannot He help? He that made the Eye, cannot He see? And He that planted the Ear, shall not He hear?

Foolish therefore, as well as Prophane, is the Conceit of *Epicurus*, who fancies God to be without Power, without Arms, above Fear himself, and as little to be fear'd, placing him between the Orbs solitary and idle, out of the reach of Mortals, not minding our Concerns, nor so much as hearing our Prayers.

And with as little Sence did the Statuary make *Jove*'s Idol, in *Crete*, without Eyes, and without Ears, if he design'd in it the Image of the True GOD; for otherwise the Statue might well enough serve such a Poetick God as *Jove*, or that of *Epicurus* mention'd before.

Since then God hears our Prayers, our Words, and Thoughts, without the calves of our Lips, and understands by what Springs they all move, before we date them, how careful should we be, that they be serious, devout, and good, according to his Will; and in so doing, we shall not only perform a reasonable, but most acceptable Ser-

vice unto God. Which leads me to my Third Particular.

III. *Prayer is a Special Part of God's Worſhip.*

Prayer is the turning of a pious *Mind* from the World unto God; the Confluence of all Good, and Complement of all Happineſs; it is a flight from Earth, and purſuit after Heaven; it is that which draws us nigheſt to God of any thing in Earth, and which the Lord doth moſt delight in. Χειρῶν Ἔργον ἄριστόν ἐς ἀρετὴν αἰεὶν ὁ εἴρειν Ἀγνὰς, καὶ παρέχειν εὐσεβέεσσι λιτάς, the beſt Work, and principal part of his Service. There may be in Heathens other Virtues, as Temperance in *Tubero*, Manſuetude in *Pomponius Atticus*, &c. but he that prays well, is a good Chriſtian. Hearing, Reading, Meditating, and Conferring about the Word of God, are prime Luminaries, and Parts of Chriſtianity; but true and fervent Prayer exceeds them all, it being, I may ſo ſpeak, the Life of Devotion, and Spirit of Religion.

Hereby we pleaſe God, better than with whole Hecatombs of Animal Sacrifices, or Rivers of Oyl, the Odour thereof fragrant to Him as the choiceſt Fumes of *Arabia* to Men; the taſte delightful, like the Spices of the World, ſweet as the Honey, or the Honey-comb. *Cant.* iv. 11. *The lips of thy Spouſe, Lord! drop as the Honey, or the Honey-comb: Milk and Honey are under her lips.*

IV. *Of the Efficacy and Power of Prayer, which the beſt of Perſons have uſed.*

It is of wonderful Power and Efficacy, if it be well and skilfully handled. It has a potent Charm againſt Evil, and Prevalence towards Good; being duly apply'd, a certain Antidote againſt Sin, and Means to obtain God's Bleſſings.

Some

Some do aſcribe, but falſly, great Vertue to a piece of Wood faſhion'd in the form of a Croſs, which this really has and is the true Holy-water, whereby Devils are caſt out: As in *Rome*, when a Dictator was created, all other Authority was for that time ſuſpended. So, whilſt Prayer has poſſeſſion of our Souls, all Evils are either out of doors, or ſo compos'd, that they do not diſturb us; but then our Prayers muſt not be unforeſighted, nor ungoverned, like thoſe monſtrous People *Pliny* ſpeaks of, whoſe Feet go backward, and their Eyes behind; they muſt be right and ſtreight, by which poſition, as the Haven to the Mariner in a great Tempeſt, or an Inn to the Traveller in ſtormy weather, ſo will they yield Comfort and Tranquility to Man, in the Waves and Winds of his Troubles.

This is it the beſt of Perſons have uſed, and ſome of its excellent Forms they penn'd, we find recorded in Scriptures, as of *Moſes*, *Daniel*, *David*, *Nehemiah*, St. *Paul*, and our Saviour, in whom did the depth of *Wiſdom*, and fulneſs of *Power* dwell.

The Effects of it have been ſo extraordinary, that none would believe, did not the Holy Ghoſt bear witneſs unto the Truth.

Nehemiah thereby repair'd the Breaches and Walls of *Jeruſalem*; this turned the Red-Sea into dry Land, for *Moſes* and the *Iſraelites* to paſs over: But as for the *Egyptians* that did not call upon the Name of the Lord, they were drowned in the Sea, and, as *Oraſius*, an old Author, tells us, the prints and footſteps of their Chariots, Horſes, and Men were a long time after to be ſeen on the Shore, and in the Depth. The Prayers of the Righteous have Command over the Sky: Hereby did *Elias* bottle up the Rain in their Clouds, and threw them out at his pleaſure, ſo that the ſmoaking ſhowers came down thick and cloſe, to be cup'd in the Valleys, and make the Hills overflow with full

full brimmers of the same. They pierce the Firmament; *Joshua* therewith put the Sun to a stand, and at *Hezekiah*'s Prayer the same went back. *Solomon* calls them *a strong Tower of Defence*; and indeed they are a sure Shield to those that use them right against the Enemy: Without these, our Strength becomes weak, and with them our Weakness strong. When *Moses* let down his Hands, and did not pray, the *Amalekites* overcame; but when *Moses* in Prayer lift up his Hands, then *Israel* prevail'd.

It is needless here to add Human Testimonies and Examples, to prove the great Efficacy and wonderful Power of Prayer; I shall not therefore cite St. *Austin*'s Conversion thereby, nor tell how a whole *Roman* Army, parboil'd with Heat, and ready to dye with extream Thirst, was miraculously preserv'd by cool Rains, brought down from Heaven with this Hand; whilst Hail-fire, in their sight, consumed the Enemy, not calling on God.

Its Efficacy and Power [I had almost said omnipotent] so great, that nothing is thought too difficult for it; well handl'd by good Persons, its use so excellent, that the greatest and best Persons [as you see] have not disdained to practise so Heavenly an Employment, thinking it their most Reasonable Service to pay unto God, to whom they often prayed; which is my next Particular.

V. *The Object of our Prayers, GOD alone.*

We must pray to God alone. We may well break forth with the *Psalmist*, and say, *Whom have we in Heaven but thee, O Lord?* None at all to direct our Prayers to, none else to hear us, none else in Heaven: but God to assist us; and therefore this is the Confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing of him according to his Will, he heareth us; and that whosoever shall call on his Name, shall

be

be deliver'd; But, in what part of Scripture are we commanded, exhorted, or ſuffer'd, by Preſident and Example, to call upon any elſe to ſave us, and do us any good?

Tho' *Moſes* and *Elias* be together with God on the Mount, yet the ſtill Voice from Heaven ſpeaketh of none but Chriſt, hear ye Him? We are commanded to fear the Lord our God, and to ſerve Him, without mention of any other Perſon.

The *Heathens* had a Notion of *Dæmons* negotiating Human Affairs with the Supreme God, from whence the idolatrous Practice among the *Papiſts*, in Praying to Saints, has ſprung; ſo that the Blood of Chriſt is counted a vile thing.

God alone, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, is to be prayed to the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity: No Angels, nor Saints; for the Scriptures do not warrant us, themſelves reject it. To what purpoſe are our Prayers to the Dead, who can neither hear, nor help us? nor will God accept of any other Mediator, but his own Son, recommended to us in the Scriptures.

But, to ſtep aſide from this Field of Controverſie, and paſs to the Subject of our Prayers, or what we muſt pray for.

VI. *The Subject of our Prayers is Good and Evil; Good, for which we pray; Evil, againſt which we petition: the former of which is called Supplication, the later Deprecation.*

Of the *Firſt*, *Supplication.* And,

1*ſt*, We muſt pray for the ſubſtantial Bleſſings of the Soul, the *Fear of God*, and *Heavenly Wiſdom*, which *paſſeth all Underſtanding*, an upright Heart, Grace, and Strength to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*; for Pardon

of our Sins, the Love of Christ, the *Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*, the Peace of *Jerusalem*, inward and heavenly Comfort: All which, according to the Proverb,—— Θεῶ ὸν γόνασι κεῖται, may be purchas'd by our Prayers, and are 'specially to be sought after; without them all things else are Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, painted Grapes for the Fruits of *Paradise*.

2*dly*, We may pray likewise for the Necessaries of this Life in Subordination to the former; for tho' the things be not good in themselves, yet still a *Viaticum* is necessary; for we be passing through the Wilderness of this World, from the Womb and *Egypt* of Sin, towards the Heavenly and Happy *Canaan*: And, seeing *Manna* from Heaven is not expected without a Miracle, we must have and be content with the Flesh-pots of *Egypt*.

Secondly, Of *Deprecation*.

We must Deprecate, and Pray against all manner of Evil, whether it be the Evil of *Sin*, or the Evil of *Punishment*.

1*st*, Against the Evil of *Sin*.

That it may not come nigh our Dwelling, that our Hearts may not be imbitter'd by this dead Water of *Mariana*, that we take heed unto our ways; or if we do slip, our Offences may consist with our Infirmities, not gross, numerous, nor unrepented of; that as our original and preceeding Sins are washed away in the *Water* of *Jordan*, by Baptism, so the after and actual Pollutions of our Hands may be wiped away by the Blood of Christ in his Fellowship.

2*dly*, Against the Evil of *Punishment*.

That the Lord would be pleased to heal our Sorrows, and take away our Judgments, that the Evils present may not hurt us, nor those that threaten come to pass to do us any Harm, but that the Lord would in his Mercy be pleased

ſed to deliver us from all Evil, either in this Life, as Poverty, Diſgrace, Sickneſs, Peſtilence, Famine, Factions, Wars, Conſpiracies, Rebellions, Aſſaſſinations, or other Evils, which may happen on ourſelves, the King, or the Nation, and ſo on ourſelves, becauſe on the King or the Nation; or in the other Life, everlaſting and Hell-fire. And this He will do, if we pray to him as we ought: which ſhews me my ſeventh and laſt Particular, *viz.*

VII. *The manner of our Prayers, humbly and ardently, in Faith and full Hope on God for the Fruits of them.*

Man is not moved as Engines, by Violence; nor as irrational Animals, by Inſtinct; nor attracted, as Steel by the Load-ſtone, but drawn by the Light of the Holy Spirit in the *Mind*, and Conſent of the *Will*; who, if he move right, muſt do it towards God by Prayer, which He has conſecrated for the beſt way to come unto him.

But we muſt do that too according to *His Will*, Pray ſo as we ought in the Holy Ghoſt, and in the Spirit. Never was any loving and kind Mother more willing that her full Breaſts ſhould be ſuck'd by her ſweet and tender Infant, than our Bleſſed God is, that we ſhould put up our Prayers unto him, to derive from his fulneſs; but we muſt do it in his own Method and Manner, and then,

Tho' we be little vile Creatures, yet he will deal with us not according to our Baſeneſs, but according to the Riches of his Power, with the Liberal Hand of his high Majeſty. As,

Alexander, who when one of his Favourites asked the King a Penſion for his Service, gave him a whole City; which the Petitioner modeſtly refuſing as too much, the King anſwer'd, *If it was too much for him to receive, it was not too much for him, being the great* Macedonian *King, and Conqueror of the World, to give.* So

So will the Lord, I ſay, deal with us, if we ſeek unto him as we ought; he will give as a King gives, with the liberal hand of the Moſt High, not according to our Unworthineſs or Demerits, but amply and ſuperabundantly, even a ſtrong City, the Heavenly *Jeruſalem.*

On the contrary;

If we call not on Him as we ought, nor mind this Duty, to do it, we ſhall receive none of his precious Gifts, nor have his Comforts: In the Streets of Captivity ſhall then our Voice be heard; we ſhall cry out, and weep with *Rachael*, not to be comforted, but the Lord will *laugh at our Calamity, and mock when our Fear cometh*, becauſe we did not pray unto the Lord, or our Prayers were deform, like the daſhes of irregular Waves in the *Euripus*, or the whiſtling of Winds in a *Wood.* Therefore, that you may pray acceptably,

Firſt, Pray humbly.

It is the good Obſervation of *Ariſtotle*, we ſhould handle Divine Matters with Modeſty and Reverence. Now *Prayer* being the moſt ſubſtantial part of Divine Worſhip, ſhall we approach it otherwiſe? As God takes no Delight in the Sacrifice of Beaſts, or in the Pictures of Gold and Silver, but in *Prayer*, ſo He would have it perform'd with an holy and ſubmiſſive Will, otherwiſe we ſhall pray fondly, and in vain: without Humility they will not profit, fly they like *Xerxes*'s Arrows, moſt numerous and thick, they may well darken our Service, they will never ſtrike the Sun of Righteouſneſs graciouſly to affect and hear us.

Secondly, Pray ardently.

As we muſt pray in *Humility*, which can never deſcend too low, ſo with our Affections, which can never aſcend too high; no Bound or Meaſure muſt be ſet unto them, but with all our united Powers, all the Heart, and all the Soul,

Soul, with all the Mind, and with all the Strength, pray unto him. We must wrestle with God in Prayer, and offer as it were an holy Violence to the King of Heaven. To be lukewarm in Religion, is the black Character of *Laodicea*; therefore let that be far from being justly imputed unto us, and our Prayers the best part of our Service. Ardent Desires, like *Elijah*'s fiery Chariot, should ravish us to Heaven and the Presence of God, otherwise we shall not be able to rise, with our dull Clogg of Flesh, from the Earth. *Christianity* is a Race, *Heaven* the Prize; we must run then, and fast, to obtain.

As among the *West-Indians* some are reported by *Acosta* the Jesuite to be so quick in Running, that no Horse can keep pace with them; so we must be quick in our Prayers, that the Thoughts of the World may not overtake us. This World is the Wilderness, Heaven the *Canaan*, but it has no Sons of *Anak* to keep us away; indeed it may be storm'd, and that may easily be done by the Vigour of your Prayers; for, since the days of *John* the Baptist, the Kingdom of Heaven suffers Violence, and the Violent take it by force of this spiritual praying Sword.

3*dly*, Pray faithfully with full Hope and Relyance on God for the Fruits of them.

As our *Humility* stands aloof, and knows its distance with the *Publican*, but *Ardour*, *Jehu*-like, drives furiously on towards Heaven; so *Faith* in Prayer compleats all; with *Moses*, it stands in the Gap, and closely joyns us in Union with God. The Gates of Heaven shall fly open to us, so we have this Oyl in our Lamps, to prepare for meeting Christ the Bridegroom. With *Faith* and *Piety of Mind* every Expression in our Prayers is acceptable to the Lord above, and brings us to Him; but if we regard *Hypocrisie* in our Hearts, the Lord will not hear us, nor come nigh our Dwelling. It is said, in *Judah* the Hand of

God was, to give them one Heart; so must we with singleness of Heart pray unto God, that our Hearts be not double, that we may go unto Him as that Dove to *Noah's* Ark, with unimaginable Sweetness and Joy, to repose our selves on his Mercy-seat: Thus if we do, we pray according to the Will of God; which if we follow, He shall hear us, and help our Infirmities. *Balaam* in a Fit of Devotion may cry out, *O that I might dye the death of the Righteous, and that my last end might be like his!* But this is hypocritical, neither sound nor rooted; whatsoever we do, we must do it sincerely, as unto the Lord, and not unto Men, knowing that of the Lord we shall receive our rich Inheritance. Our Prayers must have Heart and Root to grow and continue; and we, as *Alceus* in a contrary Case, who is said to have taken Arguments from every Season of the Year, for his Intemperance in Drinking; That the Spring requir'd it in sign of Joy; the Summer, to temper his Heat, and cool himself; that it was due to Autumn, as dedicated to the Vintage; and Winter requir'd it to expel Cold. So should we, I say, from all the Passages of this Life, take occasion to pray unto God, in the time of Adversity, that He may help us; in the Season of Prosperity, that He has done it. Let none think with himself, God does not mind the passing over this Duty, nor see the other Sins we be at any time guilty of; for tho' a Man sit as close upon the Idols of his Heart as *Rachael* did upon her Father's Images, he may hide his Mercies from himself, but not his Sins from God. How great reason then has Man to mind his Business, do his Duty, especially this of *Prayer*, which is, as St. *Austin* calls it, a *Spiritual Exercise*, and says, *It is so much the more accepted*; but then it must be perform'd in Spirit, and in Truth.

But

But that I may not seem to forget the Occasion of this Day:

As *Prayer* is our indispensible Duty at all times, it must consequently needs be so now: As it is of wonderful Power and Efficacy in Times of Troubles and Dangers to those that make the right use of them, so *now especially* have we no reason to neglect it in this proper Occasion, but handle well the great Duty. And as *Fasting* is always justly acknowledg'd to be its good Helpmate, so *that* is with good Consideration and Reason, by the Administrators of our Government, at this time annexed, when we are surrounded with Fears, and Terrors threaten us on every side. How many Enemies have we at home, and in our own Bosom, some being Malecontents of desperate Fortunes, who having consum'd their Estates by their Debaucheries, embrace any occasion to raise a new Fund for the maintenance and support of these their ill ways; and these present they take to be the Times for their Purposes and Designs to separate us, to ruine and divide what we have; therefore their Custom is, to kindle every Spark, and light it to a Flame, for our combustion, whilst we are otherwise busie at home and abroad, and not at leisure to mind their Intrigues. Others there are, whose Principles and Religion do *allow* them, *lead* them, *exhort*, and give *Command* to them, for our Ruine and Destruction, being *Hereticks* in their Account, and, as Stubble, fit for nought but the Fire. These are open and bare-fac'd Enemies, who I need not mention, and were never inclin'd to our Side and Interest. Some likewise there are that are *Achitophel's*, cunning Politicians, whose out-sides, like the Apples of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, seem fair to the View, but their inner parts are Ashes and Death to us-ward. To use a familiar Comparison, they are like our Watermen, that look one way,

and

and row another; moſt dangerous Perſons, that (like the little Creature in the Crocodile) grow, and eat our very Bowels, which have yearned with Compaſſion long towards them that hate us.

But we are not only thus fetter'd at home, but abroad are engag'd in a moſt bloody and expenſive War with a puiſſant Prince, the Abſolute and Arbitrary Monarch of *France*, who fluſh'd with long Victories and Succeſs againſt his unequal and weak Neighbours, and having by Policy, Power, and Fraud hugely encroach'd upon their Territories, to the great enlargement of his own, ſeems to ſtand on the Tiptoes of Greatneſs, and be in the *Zenith* of his Power, not only threatning his Confines, but all *Europe* with his Strength.

The Sun of his Glory ſeems to have riſen to its full height, to have touch'd the Vertical Point, and now be upon its declenſion: The Wiſhes of all good Chriſtians are, That it may be ſo, that he fall to his former ſtation, ſet in his due Horizon, and be reduc'd to his primitive Right; the Hopes of all *Europe* in effecting which, are ſolely His Majeſty of *Great Britain.*

To which purpoſe, and the humbling of whom, our *Joſhua* is gone over *Jordan*, to aſſiſt the Weak, and ſet the Afflicted free: He is now at the head of the Army, and willing to expoſe his ſacred Perſon to the Thunderbolts of the roaring Cannon, the Lightnings of Bombs and Granadoes, the hailing ſhowrs of devouring Lead-Balls, the edge of the Sword, and all other cruel Inſtruments of mercileſs War the Devil can invent, or Man do Miſchief with. On this good Account he will rather, with *Cato*, chuſe to die, than the Allies *continue*, and we *be brought* under *Slavery* and *Tyranny.* Methinks I hear him ſay, *Let the Great* Turk *by Land, and the other* Turk *by Sea, the one with his Legions, the other with his Ships, cover both the Elements*, Terra firma,

firma, *and the inconſtant watery one, ſo as to leave a ſmall Point for him to ſtand on, and they unite their Endeavours to our Ruin and Deſtruction, he will, under God, deliver his People, or dye in the Good Cauſe.* A Majeſty of ſo high and undaunted Courage, like the *Fabii*, he may be outmatch'd but never overcome: And a Prince ſo generous and good, that he, who has ventur'd his Life once to redeem us from *Popery*, *Fire* and *Faggots*, is now again ready to lay it down in this War, and, for the Safety of *Europe*, to ſacrifice *his own*. He conſiders that, with *David*, he muſt ſleep in the Bed of his Glorious Anceſtors, that are gone to Everlaſting Reſt before him, and rejoyces to breath his laſt in ſo glorious a Good. As a ſtout Soldier and prudent *Generaliſſimo*, he acts, and commands and courts the moſt terrible Occaſions of ſhewing forth his Virtue, in ambition to make all ſafe, rather than himſelf ſecure.

Can we then not love ſo good a Prince? Shall we not humble ourſelves before God, that he may ſucceed? Shall we not pray, that he may be victorious? and in Tears mourn till we ſee our Shield come home again in Safety? For,

Tho' our Armies be compleat and ſtrong, our Prince that commands them active and prudent, yet there is an Uncertainty in War; the Lord of Hoſts gives the Victory to whom he pleaſes, and ſometimes ſuffers the *Philiſtine* to triumph for the Sins of his *Iſrael*: And this may be our Lot; for we have great cauſe to fear, leſt our own Sins fight againſt ourſelves, and our Wickedneſs be our Ruin.

What greater reaſon therefore have we to caſt our Sins behind us, and not provoke thereby the Holy One to Indignation, to give us up as a Prey to the Teeth of our Adverſary: All that is dear and near to us, lies at the Stake; our Laws, Lives, and Liberties, our Wives and Children, our Nation, our King, and Religion are all at this

time in danger, if the Lord be not with us. With what Earneſtneſs then ſhould we pray? How ſhould we in Sadneſs mourn, till we by good Succeſs, and our Deliverance, find that the Lord is on our ſide.

At this time we may mourn, and ſay of Laughter, *It is mad*; and of Mirth, *What haſt thou to do with us? get thee behind.* There is nothing now ſhould be muſical but Sighs and Groans, no Song in tune but the *Lamentation of a Sinner.* As for our Harp, be thou hung up, or, as *Job* ſpeaks, turned into mourning, and our Organ into the *voice of them that weep*; with the Mourner ſhall we eat Aſhes, like Bread, and mingle our Drink with Tears, till he that is gone from us come; till the King, with whom are our Hearts, and all that we have, come again in Safety to our comfort.

We have reaſon to mourn, becauſe we are in danger, be we never ſo ſtrong, but no juſt cauſe to complain of our Burden, till we find the weight of its heavineſs. There are ſome intolerable People, that are ſtill complaining of the Badneſs of the Times, to ſow Diviſion among us, and breed Confuſion; which God the Lord in his Goodneſs avert, and take away theſe wicked men from us, that our *Kingdom may be eſtabliſh'd in Righteouſneſs.*

God be thank'd, the upper Region of our Nation admits no ſuch Fumes and Peſtilential Vapours, theſe are form'd below, in the Breaſts of ordinary, ignorant, malicious, and deſigning Men, whoſe Intereſt ſways them more than their Reaſon, and Superſtition rather than Religion.

But what ill caſe are we in, that we ſhould complain, when every one lives under his own Vine, when we have Peace in our Dominions, no Plague nor Famine in our Land, but Plenty of Corn in our Barns, Plenty of Graſs and Corn in the Fields; What is there we could deſire more? What if our Condition were worſe than it is?

Good

Good and Wiſe Men conſider, they can never pay too much for their Lives, Liberties, and Religion, which are all, under God, by this War, preſerv'd hitherto; and tho' the Expences of its length be great, yet, Thanks be to the Lord's Bounty, we are not poor.

But to what purpoſe, I ſay, are our Complaints, unleſs to divide us? They will never profit us, nor do us any Service, they may well hinder us, and ſtop our Cries, that the Lord may not hear them: Is it not better to truſt in the Lord, and rely on him, cheerfully to ſubmit unto his Will, and patiently expect his gracious time of freedom from all our Troubles, wait on him, who can turn our Water into Wine, give a rich Suit for Sackcloth, Beauty for Aſhes, and a Day of Praiſe for this of our Humiliation?

God the Lord, who has ſaved us from the *Invincible Armada*, and deſtroy'd it; who deliver'd us from that Helliſh Conſpiracy, whereby King and Parliament, the Head and principal Members of this Nation, were all to be blown up at one deviliſh blaſt; and has lately preſerved the *KING*, with *Us* in *Him*, from that horrid and accurſed *Aſſaſſination*; is ſtill able to ſave and deliver us from the Hands of our Enemies, *whoſe Mercies are cruel*, and give them up to our Power, or ſend His own Angel to ſcatter and ſlay them, that their dead Bodies be Meat to the Fowls of the Air, and Beaſts of the Earth, and we ſecur'd from the Snares of the Hunter.

But this the LORD is not like to do, except we *humble* ourſelves before Him, for our Sins and Tranſgreſſions; He is not like to go forth with our Fleets and Armies, nor ſuffer what we take in hand to proſper, without calling faithfully upon His Holy Name.

Where-

Wherefore, as it is not only our bounden Duty, but Interest, to do it, let us pray as we ought unto the Lord, that He may go out with our Fleets and Armies; that He may bless His People, and make us Victorious, that the King may ride in Triumph, with Acclamations of great Joy, every one of his faithful Subjects being glad, and cheerfully saying,

GOD Save the KING.

FINIS.

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